

public classroom teacher. And in both of these situations I recognized, first of all, as a legislator, the capacity of the State to fund public education. And as a teacher, I understood firsthand the need for adequate funding of education. And it seemed as if in all cases there was some gigantic blockage that made it impossible for those two needs to kind of coalesce together.

Well, today I am a Member of this august body, I am a member of the Federal Government, and I have identified what I think is that blockage that made it so difficult to bring these two needs together. That blockage is we. It is the Federal Government. It is the amount of land that the Federal Government owns.

Like a dam in a creek that artificially stops the flow of water in that creek, there is a dam on the stream of funds for kids, and that dam is the biggest landowner this side of the Soviet Union: we, the Federal Government.

Let me try and illustrate what I am talking about. If you look at this first map, notice the States that are in red. These are the States that have the most difficult time of increasing their funds and their commitment to public education. And you will notice that these red States are predominately in the West. Twelve of the 15 States with the slowest growth in public education funding are actually found in the West. And it is a significant difference.

These Western States have an increase of around 33 percent in their funding growth of education, whereas the Eastern States have a 68 percent increase in their growth of funding.

Let us try the next one. If you look at the kind of concept of class size, once again if you look at the States that are in red, those are the States with the largest class size. And it is a significant difference, as much as an average of 3 per class in each of those particular States.

Let me try the third one as well. If you look at the need for public education funding, the States once again in red are the States where the need is greatest.

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The States in red, those in the West have a 3 percent growth rate in their population going into public education. The East this year for the first time got up to zero percent. They had been the negative number system before that time. So why is this situation where the States in red, those in the West, are always having a difficult time in funding of education? It is not because they do not tax as much.

If you look at the western States, their total State and local taxes are equal to or higher than those in the East. And it is not because they do not have a commitment to education. If you look at the percentage of their budget that goes to education, it is once again a higher ratio almost by .6 percent higher in the West than it is in the East.

If the West is taxing as much, if they are as committed in their budget, if they have the need, yet their class sizes are high and they cannot fund the education that happens to be there, then what seems to be the problem? What is this obstacle?

I happen to think that I found at least a *prima facie* case for a correlation, and it is land. If you draw an imaginary line between Montana to New Mexico, everything west of that line, 52 percent of that is owned by the Federal Government. Go east of that line and only 4 percent is owned by the Federal Government. Let us try this next map and you will see what I mean.

Everything indicated in blue is the amount of each State owned and controlled by the Federal Government. If you make a correlation with those States having a difficult time funding their educational system and the amount of land owned by the Federal Government, you see an amazing correlation. The problem lies at the feet of the Federal Government. The enormous amount of land owned and controlled by the Federal Government is the reason why those States in the West are basically in the back of the financial bus for education.

Land has historically been the mechanism of funding education by States. The State of George in 1777 was the first State that actually offered opportunities to try to assist those local communities. The State of Connecticut actually sold 3 million acres of land to fund their education system. Of course it was land that was in Ohio which they claimed at the time; but even though it was not their State, at least they were selling something. Close enough for government work.

The State of Texas, you will notice, has very little land owned by the Federal Government because when they were admitted they kept their land; but immediately they set aside 17,000 acres by the State to put in a trust fund to pay for their public education programs and systems.

It goes back to when Henry VIII closed down the monasteries and redistributed the land. One of the conditions for redistributing that land was they would take the traditional role of that monastery land and help to fund the purposes of education.

There are four ways in which land connects with public education funding: through school trust lands, through royalties from land, through the enacting clause promised western States, and, fourth, through property tax.

Let me talk about a few of those for just a moment. Property tax. It is obvious those in the West do not have the property to tax. If you were to change the situation around and simply say four percent of the West should be owned by the Federal Government and put the price at about \$525 an acre, that is an average, and up it at the lowest tax rate, this is what the result would be. This is the amount of money

that each western State would have additionally that they could raise by themselves to fund public education. My State of Utah would have \$116 million. California, \$110 million. Alaska would have \$782 million, and that is only the portion that would deal with the funding of education.

There is another concept that should be involved here. When every one of these western States was made a State, there was a clause in their enabling language that said the land should be given to the Federal Government until such time as the Federal Government shall dispose of the land.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will come back at another time and review some of these issues with you. But there is a need to recognize the situation in the West. And there is a need to understand that the West is being treated unfairly, and it goes back to this problem of public ownership with the West. At some time, there needs to be a solution to this problem.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

BETRAYAL OF AMERICAN VALUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, for too long we have borne witness to relentless attacks on America's poor and working families. Abandoned by corporate America, betrayed by the political right, largely ignored by the mainstream media, our Nation's poor have become little more than an afterthought, most recently evidenced by what we saw in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

While productivity is up in this country, while profits are up in this country, wages are falling, and poverty is increasing. Since 1973, not coincidentally the year that America went from a trade surplus into a trade deficit, since 1973 the average worker has seen her wages or his wages go up about 10 percent in real dollars while that worker's productivity has increased about ninety percent. Productivity up ninety percent, wages up only 10 percent.